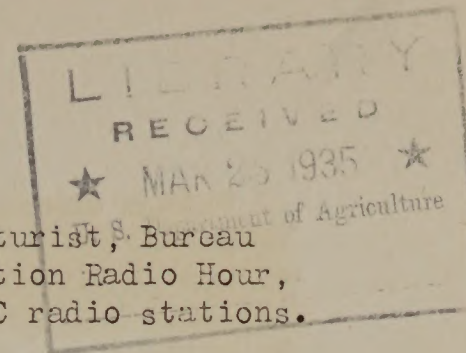


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
P69 Ra

IMPROVING HOME GROUNDS AT SMALL COST



A radio talk by Furman L. Mulford, Associate Horticulturist, Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S.D.A., delivered in the Home Demonstration Radio Hour, March 6, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 49 associate NBC radio stations.

-o-o-o-o-o-

Greetings, Friends:

Beautifying farm home surroundings may be accomplished with little outlay if effort is made to do it directly and simply.

First, every farm needs a good road from the highway to both the house and the work buildings. This should be direct, though not necessarily straight, and lead to the places that it is desired to reach, both at the house and at the barns. If the house is well arranged there will be an entrance door that is used alike by the family and visitors when approaching from the highway and that does not open directly into the kitchen. If the kitchen is the natural entrance, then the house is not well designed for a farm home and the most important step is modifying the house so there will be a door naturally used that leads into a hall or other room from which the rest of the house may be entered without passing through the kitchen.

No roads should be provided that are not needed for the everyday life of the family. A road leading to a door that is seldom used is bad design. Good footpaths should be provided wherever they will be frequently used but others should be omitted. A turn-around near the entrance door is usually warranted for the use of both family and visitors. The surface of both walks and drives should be as good as circumstances will permit. The time and money saved in having fewer drives and walks should be used in making the needed ones better.

Second, provide shade. House, barns and work-yards all need it. Deciduous trees are preferable so there will not be too much shade in winter. In locating the trees to give that needed efforts should be made to place them so they will frame the corners of the house while permitting much of the front and of the sides to be seen from the highway. Some sunshine is needed at all seasons for health, and air for comfort. On most places six or eight trees will be ample for both house and barns. If started now they will bring their comfort one year sooner than by waiting until next year. If you cannot spend the fifteen or twenty dollars necessary to purchase good sized nursery-grown trees, get five dollars' worth or collect them from some woodland or draw. Collected trees need more severe pruning at time of planting than nursery trees and they will usually start more slowly and a larger proportion of them are likely to die the first year.

Third, relieve the bareness. This may be done by putting a few bushes at the corners of the house, partially hiding other buildings, giving privacy to work-yards, screening the laundry-yard, and if there is a flower garden giving it privacy, too, by partially enclosing it. If you can buy the plants you desire from the nurseryman all right, but do not fail to start something. You may be able to get from your neighbors small sprouts, cuttings or seeds

(over)

of things common in the neighborhood, or wild plants may be collected. They may not be what you prefer but they are capable of producing the mass effect necessary. If the plants are very small they may be planted close together in one of the beds the first year and then part can be removed to another one the next. After three or four years they should be sufficiently developed that the combination of shade and the collection of fallen leaves under them should prevent the growth of weeds.

It is easy to have too much planting. Only part of the foundation lines of buildings should be hidden. After the immediate surroundings of house and barns are planted, a few groups may be placed about the boundaries of lawns, and low growing ones in the angles of drives and walks as high ones might create dangerous situations.

Fourth, make a lawn. It should not be too large, and the angles may be eliminated by shrubbery plantings of appropriate outline. Liberal enrichment of the soil is desirable and the best results come from cutting the grass regularly but not closer than two inches. Cutting with a field mower three to five times a season often gives fair results.

In conclusion: Have few but useful drives and walks. Provide shade. Relieve the bareness with shrubs. Make a lawn. For details consult U. S. Department of Agriculture Farmers Bulletin one, zero, eight, seven; ten, eighty-seven, Beautifying the Farmstead. Thank you. Good bye.

###